

Slough sign Hardwick for nothing



STEVE HARDWICK
... no fee

Young side beaten

Wycombe Reserves 0,
Feltham Reserves 3

WYCOMBE Wanderers Reserves crashed to their third successive defeat when Feltham made their experience tell in Saturday's Suburban League match at home to Feltham.

Wanderers fielded a young side, as they were unable to call upon players such as Bobby Dell, Keith Mead and Tony Price. Gary Collier, 16, started the match and was later replaced by 15-year-old Kevin Edwards, who recently reached the last 30 in England schoolboys' trials.

Despite giving away years to their rivals, Wycombe dominated the first half and went close several times before a Feltham player broke loose on the right wing and floated over a cross which was duly converted.

Fierce

Needing a goal at the start of the second half to get back into the game, Wycombe went close when Tim Lee's fierce shot was turned round for a corner. Shortly afterwards Feltham made it 2-0 when Chris Way failed to cut out a corner.

After two substitutions Wycombe were desperately unlucky when Simon Dexter hit a blistering shot against an upright.

Feltham scored the third from the penalty spot in injury time when Mark Richardson's poor back-pass forced Way to bring down a visiting forward.

WYCOMBE: C. Way; P. Bycroft, A. Vickers, M. Richardson, G. Collier (sub. K. Edwards 82 mins); S. Dexter, K. Wilson, P. West, A. Hunt, N. Shrimpton (sub. S. Arles 72 mins).

STEVE Hardwick, sacked by Wycombe Wanderers two weeks ago, has signed on for their great rivals Slough Town for nothing, writes MICHAEL KNOX.

When releasing him from his contract, Wycombe decided not to ask for a transfer fee — and Slough have stepped in to grab a player who

would probably have fetched a four-figure sum if put up for sale.

Hardwick was sacked following his controversial sending off against Cheltenham last month, when he appeared to throw a punch at an opponent.

This was the latest in a series of indiscretions by Hardwick and Wycombe decided he no longer belonged at Loakes Park.

Manager Mike Keen ex-

plained the club's reasons for not asking for a transfer fee and thus forfeiting the chance to improve the club's finances at a time of austerity.

"Steve was on the list for six weeks at the start of the season and nobody came for him," he said. "We could pay his wages until the end of the season and still not get any money."

Mr Keen considered that Hardwick's reputation as a

'troublesome' player would deter possible buyers, so that the offers would be unlikely to match what his talent on the field warranted.

"If you don't pay for a player, you don't risk anything. By not asking for money we got the matter over and done with quickly. Remember we got him for nothing."

'Surprised'

However, it could cost Wycombe some money to replace him. Meanwhile Slough Town appear pleased with their side of the bargain.

A club spokesman said: "We are delighted and somewhat surprised that we have obtained the services of a top-class non-league player for nothing. We would have been prepared to consider paying a fee for him."

Hardwick started a month's suspension on Monday, so will be out until mid-March, although he could still play an important part in Slough's championship challenge.

Wycombe, of course, are still in with an outside chance, despite only drawing 1-1 at Carshalton last Saturday in a match they should have won comfortably.

Terry Glynn, who pulled a groin muscle during that game expects to be fit for the visit of Harlow Town to Loakes Park tomorrow (Saturday). He had intensive treatment on the injury on Tuesday night and said it felt better.

Harlow, fielding many of the side that enjoyed that epic F.A. Cup run last winter, have struggled this season, but victory at Tooting on Saturday put them up to 14th spot.

Blues lift first cup

By MICHAEL KNOX Wycombe Wanderers 2, RAF 0

TWO goals in the final minute gave Wycombe Wanderers their first trophy of the season after a competitive match against the full R.A.F. side at Loakes Park on Tuesday.

By gaining revenge after last year's defeat on penalties, Wycombe lifted the impressive looking Battle of Britain Cup — and my word how they had to battle against their super-fit and will organised opposition.

Wycombe dominated the match for long periods, but until that last dramatic minute could find no way through. They were given precious little time and space by a side who made up in application what they lacked in skill.

During those first 89 minutes Wycombe forced a remarkable number of 14 corners to just one by the R.A.F. So inept was some of the corner-taking (Steve Long was the main culprit) that Wycombe were able to

create few clear cut openings.

The R.A.F., as I suppose they should be, were good in the air and with nine men back in defence for much of the time made it tough for Wycombe, who as they had at Carshalton last Saturday, missed some excellent chances.

Bombardment

The first half was more evenly contested and surprisingly the best chance fell to the R.A.F., when forward Bobby Parker broke clear. Gary Lester at first hesitated, but then stretched out a left hand to block a shot that a colleague cleared off the line.

Apart from one brief chance cleared off the Wycombe line, the R.A.F. found themselves under continual bombardment in the second half.

Just as the crowd were preparing themselves for another bout of penalties (there was to be no extra time) Wycombe finally broke through — not once but twice.

The seconds were ticking away as Ken Wilson sent over a cross from the left to beyond the far post.

For the first time on the night Long found himself with a bit of room, and his neat chip into the middle was headed home by Scott.

Inside 60 seconds they had scored again. Scott chased Paul Birdseye's long pass into the top right hand corner of the field, and his cross was put into his own net by Nigel Roggoff, who was under pressure from Paul West.

So it was a relieved Wycombe skipper Paul Birdseye, who received the Battle of Britain Cup from Air Vice Marshal M. H. Miller.

WYCOMBE: G. Lester, P. Birdseye, G. Borg, R. Davies, K. Mead, R. Dell (sub: K. Wilson 82 mins), J. Jacobs (sub: P. West 81 mins), H. Kennedy, G. Tait, T. Scott, S. Long.

R.A.F.: M. Perry, M. Edwards, G. Hurn, P. Roberts, S. Backmore, D. Hall, K. Hodson (sub: D. Woods 48 mins), M. Boden, N. Roggoff, R. Parker, S. Leonce.

Referee: J. Dinkin (R.A.F.). Half-time: 0-0. Scorers: Wycombe — Scott (80 mins), Roggoff o.g. (90).